

Advanced Life Support Policy/Procedure #14

**Preceptorship of Advanced Life Support Candidates
(Mentor – Preceptor Program)**

Origin: 11/93
Revision: 04/02

1. PURPOSE

- A. The purpose of this policy is to establish standard operating procedures, guidelines, and requirements for the local preceptorship of newly certified and/or recently affiliated Advanced Life Support providers.
- B. To provide a program that introduces new ALS providers into the system utilizing current field providers as both preceptors and mentors to provide the necessary support, guidance, and supervision with the goal of independent release of the candidate while maintaining the quality of the system.

2. TERMINOLOGY AND JOB DESCRIPTIONS

- A. **Candidate** – A recently certified and/or affiliated individual who has been authorized to function at their designated level in the field only under the on-site supervision of Preceptors within the Loudoun County EMS system. Each Candidate will be assigned a Mentor. The Candidate is responsible for maintaining records of duty hours, calls run, and evaluation forms for their Mentor's review.
- B. **Preceptorship** – A period during which a Candidate performs pre-hospital ALS treatments and therapies under the supervision of locally authorized Preceptors.
- C. **Preceptor** – An individual who has completed a Preceptor course and been authorized by their Chief, the ALS Committee, and the Operational Medical Director to function as an ALS Preceptor at a designated level. The Preceptor is responsible for the supervision of Candidates while on calls and to ensure the quality of care is maintained. The Preceptor is responsible for completing an evaluation form on the incident and discussing it with the Candidate. The Preceptor is responsible for documenting any and all difficulties or deficiencies the Candidate may have encountered on the call.
- D. **Mentor** – An individual who has been selected by the ALS Committee and endorsed by the Operational Medical Director to conduct and supervise the field training of new ALS candidates. Mentors are selected based on their independent skills, participation in training programs, and their ability to instruct students. The Mentor is responsible for overall supervision of their assigned Candidate to include any necessary counseling or additional training that may be needed by the Candidate. The Mentor is

responsible for the review of all evaluation forms completed by Preceptors to detect any deficiencies by either the Candidate or the Preceptor. Deficiencies detected that involve the performance of Preceptors shall be documented on the evaluation form and forwarded to their Chief and the ALS Committee. The Mentor is responsible for providing a monthly status report in writing and copies of reviewed call forms to the Candidate's Chief and the ALS Committee by the 5th of each month. In addition, the Mentor is responsible for providing a detailed letter of recommendation to the Chief for the release of the Candidate upon completion of the program.

- E. **Rescue Chief** – The Rescue Chief for the Candidate is responsible for reviewing monthly reports on the Candidate's progress and relaying any concerns or comments to the Mentor and/or ALS Committee if necessary. Upon receipt of the documentation and letter of recommendation for release from the Mentor, the Rescue Chief shall review the material and, if appropriate, forward the material with a letter of endorsement to the ALS Committee.
- F. **Review Committee** – A committee appointed by the ALS Committee to review the submitted documentation supporting the release of a Candidate. They report their findings to the ALS Committee in support of, or in opposition to, the Mentor and Rescue Chief's recommendations. In cases where the Review Committee's findings are not in favor of the recommendations presented, they must provide a detailed explanation of the reasons for denial, which will be forwarded to the ALS Committee for final resolution. The Rescue Chief and Mentor shall be promptly notified of any deficiencies or problems.
- G. **ALS Committee** – The Advanced Life Support Committee has been established by the Loudoun County EMS Advisory Council, Inc. It is comprised of representatives from Loudoun County agencies operating at the ALS level and works as an extension, and in support of, the Operational Medical Director. The ALS Committee is responsible for reporting the final disposition of Candidates to the Operational Medical Director upon successful completion of the program.
- H. **Operational Medical Director** – The Operational Medical Director has the final decision on the release of a Candidate upon receiving the recommendations from the ALS Committee and the Candidate's Rescue Chief. The Operational Medical Director shall be kept informed of any problems during the process by the Rescue Chief and/or ALS Committee and may act as necessary.

3. PREREQUISITES FOR PRECEPTORSHIP

- A. Before a Candidate is authorized to begin preceptorship he/she:
 - 1) Must possess current certification in the Commonwealth of Virginia as an EMT-ST/E or EMT-CT/I/P.
 - 2) Must be a member of a Loudoun County EMS Council-affiliated ALS agency licensed by the Virginia Department of Health.
 - 3) Can perform ALS interventions only when an authorized Preceptor is physically present.
 - 4) Additionally, other requirements as set forth in the ALS Policies/Procedures and/or imposed by the Operational Medical Director must be satisfied entirely.

4. PRECEPTORSHIP REQUIREMENTS

- A. Evaluations are to be performed **only** for critical care incidents as identified and managed under the auspices of the Loudoun County Advanced Life Support Protocol Document.
- B. Only one Candidate per level shall be evaluated per given patient. The Preceptor may opt to only evaluate one Candidate per call.
- C. A Preceptorship Evaluation form (see Appendix) must be completed by a Preceptor for each eligible incident.
- D. Two copies of each completed form shall be made. One copy is to be given to the Mentor, and one copy retained for the Candidate's records.
- E. Track Schedule
 - 1) **Track I (Fast Track)** – Program designed for ALS providers with a minimum of one (1) year of field ALS – EMS experience or Loudoun County ALS providers challenging to the next level. Provider's must have the recommendation of their Rescue Chief and complete the application/interview process and successfully complete all county related testing. A Mentor shall be assigned to oversee all of the activities of the Candidate. The Candidate must maintain an activity log to include both duty hours and call volume. Preceptor sheets shall be completed and reviewed by the Mentor, but there shall be no minimum point requirement. The Candidate must obtain a recommendation from the Mentor and the Rescue Chief indicating that the Candidate has demonstrated the appropriate level of competency to function independently. The letters of recommendation and precepting call sheets shall be forwarded to the Review Committee to ensure a well-rounded

preceptorship. The Review Committee forwards the final recommendation with the supporting documentation to the ALS Committee. The term of the program shall have a minimum length of sixty (60) days, and a maximum length of one hundred eighty (180) days. Extensions beyond 180 days must be endorsed by the Rescue Chief and approved by the ALS Committee.

- 2) **Track II (Normal Track)** – Program designed for ALS providers with less than one (1) year of, or little to no documented, field ALS – EMS experience. Provider's must have the recommendation of their Rescue Chief and complete the application/interview process and successfully complete all county related testing. A Mentor shall be assigned to oversee all of the activities of the Candidate. The Candidate must maintain an activity log to include both duty hours and call volume. Preceptor sheets shall be completed and reviewed by the Mentor, but there shall be no minimum point requirement. The Candidate must obtain a recommendation from the Mentor and the Rescue Chief indicating that the Candidate has demonstrated the appropriate level of competency to function independently. The letters of recommendation and precepting call sheets shall be forwarded to the Review Committee to ensure a well-rounded preceptorship. The Review Committee forwards the final recommendation with the supporting documentation to the ALS Committee. The term of the program shall have a minimum length of ninety (90) days, and a maximum length of one hundred eighty (180) days. Extensions beyond 180 days must be endorsed by the Rescue Chief and approved by the ALS Committee.

5. TO COMPLETE PRECEPTORSHIP

The Candidate must obtain a recommendation from the Mentor and the Rescue Chief indicating that the provider has demonstrated the appropriate level of competency to function independently. The ALS Technician Release form (see Appendix) needs to be signed by the Mentor and the Rescue Chief. The form, duty log, run log, and precepting call sheets shall be forwarded to the Review Committee to ensure a well-rounded preceptorship.

A. Review Committee

The Review Committee, as appointed by the ALS Committee, is responsible for the final evaluation of both the Candidate and the Mentor's performance during the preceptorship. They shall review the recommendations provided by the Mentor and the Rescue Chief and ensure it is supported by the precepting sheet documentation. The information provided must demonstrate the Candidate's abilities as listed

below. Although there is no minimum point or point distribution requirement, the Candidate must have demonstrated a well-rounded preceptorship and skill assessment. Review meetings shall be conducted in a timely manner prior to the ALS Committee meeting.

B. Competency Requirements

To be recommended for release, the Candidate must successfully demonstrate competency in the following categories to be recommended without reservation.

- 1) Knowledge of protocols
- 2) Knowledge of medications and dosages (to include drips for CT/I/Ps)
- 3) Ability to appropriately manage patients
- 4) Ability to manage crew
- 5) Ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with hospitals/Medical Control
- 6) Ability to efficiently and effectively document incidents
- 7) Ability to utilize independent assessment skills and decision making skills effectively

- C. Preceptorship shall not routinely exceed one hundred eighty (180) days duration. Any request for extension of a Candidate's preceptorship period beyond the allotted 180 days must be submitted in writing to the ALS Committee through the LCFR EMS Training Division. This written request must be specific as to the circumstances necessitating the extension, and must be endorsed by the Candidate's Rescue Chief. The ALS Committee, at regular business meetings, will evaluate each request for extension. Subsequent to this review, their agency's ALS Committee representative will notify the Candidate and his/her Rescue Chief with the disposition of their request. Each extension that is granted shall be for a ninety (90) day period, at the end of which scenario-based practical testing, supervised by the Operational Medical Director or his designee, will be conducted. Release from preceptorship will not be granted until this supplemental testing requirement has been successfully completed. In each case, the Preceptorship Period will not exceed a total of two hundred seventy (270) days.

- D. Review of specific information regarding precepting and evaluations is incorporated into EMT-ST/E and EMT-CT/I/P “Basic” course instruction, the Challenge Exam Preparatory Course, and the Preceptor Training Course.

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